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Consolidation of the Islamic Republic of Iran

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CONSOLIDATION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

A Thesis

Presented to

The Department of Sociology

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

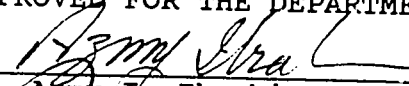
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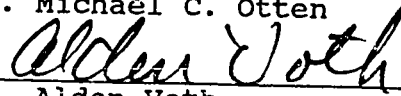
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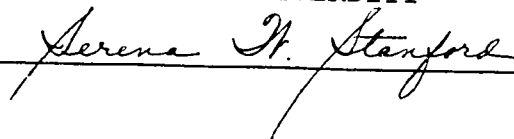
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ABSTRACT

CONSOLIDATION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

by Shapour Shahrokhi

The subject of this research paper is the process of consolidation of the Islamic Republic after the 1979 Iranian Revolution and the comparison of this process with other revolutions and predominant theories of revolution. The thesis argues that the regime has been successful in consolidating itself, primarily by means of its use of Islamic ideology combined with ruthless repression of all forms of opposition. It points to the use of Islamic ideology and the traditional religious network in the consolidation of the regime as an element in the revolutionary process that does not conform to traditional models. A review and analysis of theories of revolution is included.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. THEORETICAL APPROACHES ON REVOLUTIONS	11
III. METHODOLOGY	22
Design	22
Measurement	24
IV. ISLAMIC THEOCRACY	27
Role of the Islamic Ideology	27
Velayat Fagih	29
Traditional organization of the clergy	31
Consolidation of the Islamic Regime	34
Turning point	35
Establishment of the political organizations	38
Islamic Republican Party	46

Repression of the Opposition	50
Ethnic minorities	51
Liberals	55
Mojahedin	59
Roles of the Communist Groups	65
Suppression of the Masses	68
Discussion	72
Analytical Discussion	72
Summary	76
V. CONCLUSION	79
Epilogue	82
NOTES	86
WORKS CITED	94

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Iranian revolution of 1978-79 was the latest of its type. It was a popular social movement, in which millions of people were activated to overthrow a 2500 year old monarchy. There have been some differences between the Iranian revolution and other classical revolutions, such as the 1789 French or the Russian revolution of October 1917.

In addition to the involvement of huge masses of people in the revolution, two more characteristics set it apart. The first is the role religion played as the ideology of the movement, which substituted a theocracy for a monarchy. The second is that the high speed modernization process during the Shah's regime motivated a reactionary revolution. These two characteristics raise questions about other variables associated with the revolution. Why, for instance, was religious fundamentalism so attractive? Why did the Iranians show such a powerful tendency against modernization or Westernization?

But more interesting questions arise when researchers look at the post-revolutionary period and try to relate assumptions about how the revolution occurred to how the post-revolutionary regime functioned. A decade has passed since the revolution occurred in Iran, and this makes it

possible to examine the new regime's functions. In these years, Iranian society experienced drastic changes. The country suffered from an eight-year destructive war, which took more than a million young lives, made half a million disabled and left millions of people homeless.⁽¹⁾ In addition, billions of dollars will be needed for recovery.⁽²⁾ The foreign policy of the Islamic regime isolated the country from the world. Finally, the new regime lost supporters and is confronted with massive discontent.⁽³⁾ Yet, the Islamic government not only survived, but also it has successfully consolidated itself. This remarkable survival will be explored in this research.

The causes of consolidation are related to the causes of the revolution itself. As a general premise, the considerable role of the cultural element must be recognized. Most of the inquiries seem to agree that such fundamental forces as economic crisis, class struggle based on the growing gap between poor and rich, the need for land reform, or the movement toward modernization did not play the main role in provoking the revolution. In summary, the role of ideological or even spiritual interests over material interests made the revolution unique.

Moreover, the cultural conflict between the traditional middle class and the relatively small modern

groups, which had occupied the most controlling positions in the society (in government, education, business, and entertainment), motivated revolts. Those people who were repressed, humiliated, and ignored by the pro-Western regime of the Shah tried to redefine their identity through unified protest against the monarchy. These masses, given their historical background, searched for their leaders among the clergy.⁽⁴⁾ This happened not merely because of the people's religious sentiments, but because of the unavailability of any reliable alternative leadership for them. Nationalists and leftists were both present but neither was as able or prepared to be influential in the society as was the clergy.⁽⁵⁾

The clergy occupied the leadership of the movement because of the Islamic ideology, which was traditionally represented by clergymen. Additionally, they were able to introduce a well known Ayatollah as the symbol of the opposition against the Shah. Ayatollah Khomeini was not only a long time enemy of the Shah and a strong opponent of modernization, but also a charismatic leader who knew the culture, customs, values, norms, and habits of the masses well, and was cleverly able to introduce himself as a popular leader. Finally, the clergy obtained the leadership because they had a complex and hierarchical organization, with tens of thousands of Mullas (preachers) as its members, spread all over the country.⁽⁶⁾

Given the clergy's advantage, therefore, no other political alternative seemed to be capable of stepping forward. However, this situation did not always seem so definite, especially in 1980-81, when a confrontation by the Mojahedin, a radical Islamic organization, threatened to jeopardize the theocracy. Nonetheless, the regime managed the hostage crises successfully, eliminated its opposition completely, handled one of the largest wars in recent history, and built a powerful system of governing, which seems to be stable in spite of all of its problems. But how?

The answer to this question is the main concern of this study. While reviewing all major political incidents during the last decade, it is possible to recognize two major strategies of the Islamic fundamentalists in dealing with their opponents and moving towards consolidating the regime. The first strategy relies on propaganda, in which all clergymen have been trained for centuries, and the second strategy is the use of violence.

Regarding propaganda, the major job of Mullahs, in fact, has always been religious propaganda and demagoguery. The following comments by Hamid Algar, a pro-Regime scholar, show to what extent this is true:

In particular, Taziya and Raudakhvani (dramatic performances and recitations commemorating the martyrdom of the Iman Husayn...were considered reprehensible by many Ulama (Mullahs)...It is true that certain Ulama engaged in superstitious practices and laid claim to Karamat (miraculous deeds), but, on the whole, the distinction between the religious approaches of the Ulama and the mass of the community is valid. ...They were in more immediate contact with people, and even to an extent financially dependent upon them. (7)

Based on such attitudes, the clerical group at the top of the regime managed to utilize every political incident in favor of their inherited theocracy. They stopped the first wave of popular discontent with the hostage crisis. They claimed to be fighting "The Great Satan" but, in fact, were diverting people's attention from their major problem and buying time to consolidate their regime. (8)

War with Iraq likewise provided an important diversion. Fundamentalists were able to isolate all opposition forces and obtain popular support by pretending that the outside world and the superpowers had attacked their regime. They always attacked nationalism as a Western ideology, but, after the war with Iraq began, they used it as a motive to mobilize people in the war, and gain the most benefit from it.

Recent tumult about Salman Rushdi's book, The Satanic Verses, confirms the same strategy of the fundamentalists,

who felt insecure after they had to end the war with a weak position. They needed another international crisis to buy some time to decide how to handle the post-war society and how to keep their regime in power.

While the role of propaganda is important, this study focuses on the second strategy of the regime for its consolidation--repression. Like other despotic forms of government, such as during the Shah's regime, the fundamentalists have relied on repression as the main method to stay in power.

Therefore, soon after the revolution, executive organizations took shape. The Pasdaran army, under the leadership and direct control of the clergy, was established to compete with the regular army because the Shah's Americanized army, in spite of losing its generals, has always been considered unreliable by the fundamentalists.⁽⁹⁾ The Pasdaran played a crucial role in fighting against Kurd fighters and also trained during the war with Iraq as a complete heavily armed force. Today, although the regular army is neutralized and under the control of the regime, the Pasdaran army is the main executive force of the Islamic Republic.

The Pasdaran, in companionship with semi-military groups of the Hezbollah, which were organized by the pro-Khomeini clergy, transformed the spontaneous revolutionary

committees (Komiteh) into organizations which played the role of police. Traditional police organizations were left to deal only with crime and felony, while new institutions would have control over every aspect of social life. The regime reorganized the Shah's organ for information and security (SAVAK), under the title of SAVAMA. The Pasdaran, SAVAMA, and local Komitehs, working closely together, handled the fight against the opposition and eventually eliminated organized opposition forces.

These organs of repression have also dealt with every discontent and protest by the people. They have used intimidation and fear effectively, especially after the street fights with the Mojahedin began in 1981. The Pasdaran has been able to arrest or threaten everybody by labeling them "anti-revolutionary." These people had no right to a trial. Thus, people were intimidated and silenced.(10)

For better understanding of all these events, looking at the roots of the Iranian revolution is necessary. This paper attempts to investigate 1) why the fundamentalists, among all other political groups, were able to monopolize power, and 2) how a repressive strategy helped the Islamic Republic of Iran consolidate its regime. To reply to the first question, examining the role of religious ideology and the influence of the clergy is necessary. To

reply to the second question, the study will divide the subject of repression into two categories. One will emphasize the elimination of opposition by fundamentalist forces. The other will try to illuminate how the people's demands were repressed by the Islamic government. In order to ground the study in a theoretical base, this paper includes discussions on different theories of revolution, and analyzes on repressive phases of a revolution. The researcher has reviewed some general theories of revolution, including Crane Brinton's, and has used this overview to analyze the differences of the Iranian revolution from other revolutions. However, the primary focus of this study is to examine the phase of consolidation of the post-revolutionary regime, and more specifically, to look at the necessity to use repression to consolidate a new regime. Finally, the study will measure how successful the Islamic Republic of Iran has been in responding to such necessity. Based on these remarks, the hypothesis could be formulated as follows:

The religious ideology and the traditional organization of the clergy in Iran enabled the Islamic regime to consolidate itself through ideological and physical repression. This ideology is an interpretation of Islam formulated by Ayattollah Khomeini, as "Velayat Fagih." This term represents a specific theocracy, in which Fagih

is the ultimate leader of the society. The main characteristic of such an interpretation of Islam is based on the principle that religion and government should not be separate and that the clergy must govern the society based on the religious rules.

This has been possible because of the existence of a popular traditional organization of the clergy all over the country. Both the influence of the religious ideology among the people and the organizational abilities of the clergy helped the fundamentalist clergy legitimize their regime. They also persuaded a large segment of people to use or support violence against the opposition and enforced ideological and physical repression.

Consolidation of the Islamic regime meant that the regime was able to exist for a decade and protect itself from all serious threats through constructing and institutionalizing the mechanism of governing. The post-revolutionary regime, which consisted of different sectors (fundamentalists, Islamic liberals, nationalists, and Islamic radicals), and was inconsistent in its policies, was changed into a totalitarian regime, in which fundamentalists, under the absolute leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, took all powers in their hands. The executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government found the followers of Khomeini occupying all major positions.

From 1981 to 1983, the regime invaded all opposition organizations, arrested a large portion of their members, and effectively crushed them. The opposition includes all leftist groups, the Mojahedin, nationalist organizations, and even those Islamic groups who dishonored Velayat Fagih. The regime put an end to the opposition as a political organization; however, discontent and opposition among individuals continued to exist.⁽¹¹⁾

The Islamic regime also frightened and intimidated those people who no longer supported the regime, or who protested any aspect of the government. Fundamentalists made it clear to everyone that no deviation from their Islamic rules would be tolerated.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO REVOLUTIONS

To achieve a theoretical base for this study a review of the literature of revolutions is helpful. The term "revolution" is often used loosely to describe any far-reaching change in social patterns, as in "industrial revolution" or "sexual revolution." To the sociologist, a revolution must be a basic change of system. Sigmond Neumann formulated this as:

a sweeping, fundamental change in political organization, social structure, economic property control, and the predominant myth of a social order, thus indicating a major break in the continuity of development.(1)

Revolutions take place suddenly and are characterized by the use of violence. The French, Russian, and Chinese Revolutions are classical examples of such great upheavals that tore societies apart and rebuilt them on a new basis. A social scientist may analyze each of these major events separately and create a historical, political, or sociological study. But, when it comes to generalizing or formulating a theory about revolutions, problems and disagreements arise. Thus, different theories take shape based upon different approaches to the study of

revolutions. This makes it difficult to draw a generally acceptable sketch for definition and characterization of all revolutions. Even the ways of categorizing different theories vary among sociologists. This study is using the approach J.A. Goldstone uses in his remarkable article overwiewing theories of revolution, "The Comparative and Historical Study of Revolutions," in The Annual Review of Sociology, 1982.(2)

According to Goldstone, the basic problems faced in formulating a theory of revolution can be made clear by considering some common notions of why revolutions occur. In this respect, he mentions three widely-held views and their shortcomings. The first view states that misery breeds revolt. When oppression on people passes above certain levels, people cannot tolerate it and rise up against their oppressors. Although this theory has some degree of truth, by looking at history, one can discover too many situations in which masses had been under extremely oppressive conditions, but no revolution has occurred.(3) In today's world, most of the people in the Third World countries live under miserable and terrible conditions, but how many revolutions have occurred?(4)

The second common theory finds the causes of revolution in the difficulties states have managing their problems. For example, a war, a famine, or a conflict

within the ruling family may provoke a revolution. Again, reviewing history reveals some considerable examples of the accumulation of such difficulties in states which did not end in revolutions.⁽⁵⁾

The third view claims that revolutions arise when new, radical ideas shake people out of their accustomed acceptance of their lives.⁽⁶⁾ The question is, what causes such ideas in the first place? Besides, how can one explain the fact that ideas of democracy and citizenship were current among the Greeks and Romans, but they shook only European societies twenty centuries later?

Social scientists also can be categorized in three schools based on how they define revolutions. The first school, known as the natural-history school, defines revolution narrowly. These scholars studied great revolutions and called only those political upheavals "revolutions," which were similar to their studies. The Natural History of Revolution by L.P. Edwards, published in 1927,⁽⁷⁾ The Process of Revolution by G.S. Pettee, published in 1938,⁽⁸⁾ and Crane Brinton's famous work The Anatomy of Revolution published in 1938, are some salient examples of such studies.

This approach tries to identify typical stages in the process of revolution, as well as common social-psychological characteristics of the process of revolutionary upheaval.

Brinton's work, for example, suggests a certain post-revolutionary pattern, based upon his study of the English, American, French, and Russian revolutions. He recognized four stages: 1) a short period of moderate rule comes after the overthrow of the old regime; 2) a radical faction then ascends to power because of the inability of the moderates to hold their position; 3) the radicals, after taking all power into their hands, impose a system of suppression against any opponents and demand discipline and sacrifice for the revolution, called the "Reign of Terror and Virtue"; and 4) a strong dictator, such as Cromwell in England, Napoleon in France, and Stalin in Russia, emerges and the revolution moves to its last stage, the Thermidor.⁽⁹⁾

The natural-history theorists identified a remarkable correspondence among the major events which comprised these great revolutions. Goldstone summarized them in ten propositions and called them the legacy of the natural histories of revolution. These propositions are briefly as follows:

- 1) Prior to a great revolution, the bulk of the intellectuals stop supporting the regime and demand some major reforms.
- 2) Just prior to the fall of the old regime, the state attempts to meet its sharpest criticism by undertaking major reforms.

- 3) The actual fall of the regime begins with an acute political crisis, brought on by the government's inability to deal with some economic, military, or political problem, rather than by the action of a revolutionary opposition.
- 4) Even where the revolutionary opposition to the old regime was once united, the collapse of the old regime eventually reveals the conflicts within the revolutionary opposition.
- 5) The first group to seize the reins of state are moderate reformers.
- 6) While the moderates seek to reconstruct rules on the basis of moderate reform, often employing organizational forms left from the old regime, alternative, more radical centers of mass mobilization spring up with the new forms of organization.
- 7) The great changes in the organization and ruling ideology of a society that follow successful revolutions occur not when the old regime first falls, but when the radical, alternative, mass-mobilizing organizations succeed in supplanting the moderates.

- 8) The disorder brought by the revolution and the implementation of the radicals' control usually results in the forced imposition of order by coercive rule.
- 9) The struggles between radicals and moderates, and between defenders of the revolution and external enemies, frequently allow military leaders to move from obscurity to commanding, even absolute, leadership.
- 10) The radical phase of the revolution eventually gives way to a phase of pragmatism and a moderate pursuit of progress within the new status quo.⁽¹⁰⁾

A second school of theorists belongs to the general-theory school. They believe in a much wider framework of collective political violence for theorizing about revolutions. They sought to ground the common causes of all events, such as great revolutions, riots, unsuccessful revolutions, and sometimes civil wars in a general theory. This group, which emerged almost a generation after the natural history theorists, referred to such generalizations, according to the fact that great successful revolutions have been rare in history, whereas political violence in developing countries has had a growing rate, and one could use them in forming theories for revolutions.

The general theories of revolution took several forms, such as the psychological approach by J.C. Davies⁽¹¹⁾ and T.R. Gurr⁽¹²⁾ during the 60's, the system-disequilibrium theory developed largely by N.J. Smelser⁽¹³⁾ and C. Johnson⁽¹⁴⁾, and the works of Charles Tilly⁽¹⁵⁾, during the 70's. The first group improved on the "misery breeds revolt" idea and concluded that, when people expect a better life but their expectations are frustrated, aggression and resentment against the social order arise. For example, as Davies argued, when a combination of events, such as a period of growing prosperity followed by a sharp economic downturn occurs, feelings of deprivation and aggression may end in political violence.

The second group of general-theorists argued that, instead of focusing mainly on popular discontent, one should examine society as a whole. They argued that, when subsystems of a society (such as the economy or political system) start to change independently, the society is confronted with the danger of imbalance, which may cause a revolution.

According to Tilly, on the other hand, conflict and discontent are normal, and political violence is likely to occur, only when opponents are able to take significant actions, such as the occupation of geographical areas by using their own massive organization and resources.

All these general theories view revolutions as purposive movements of an opposition. Therefore, they try to explain the origins of opposition to the state. But they were unable to explain those conditions behind the breakdown of states other than the opposition by itself. In the case of Iran, one may point out the spontaneity of the movement as a factor against this theory. This moved scholars to focus on empirical studies of the strengths and weaknesses of the state and its relation to the revolution, which led them to the third school, the structural theories of revolution.

Structural theorists tried to avoid both the narrow definition of the natural history theorist and the broad definition of the general theorist. They argued that although the various forms of collective political violence have some similarities, they are different kinds of events. They separated successful revolutions from unsuccessful ones and categorized different kinds of political violence.

Contrary to the general theorists, who often considered the state a scene for different groups to reflect their political conflicts, structural theorists emphasized that a diversity of goals and structures exists within states, which affect the possibilities of

revolution. For example, if a powerful elite outside the state bureaucracy tries to paralyze the state in times of conflict, and the army is weakened, revolution is probable. Yet the paralysis of the state is only one condition leading to revolution. It needs also a widespread popular uprising opposed to the state.⁽¹⁶⁾

According to Theda Skocpol, centralization and resource mobilization by the state are often not in the interest of elite groups since they may threaten their independence and privileges. In such a case, the probability of a revolution's occurring depends on the level of influence the elite have over the bureaucratic system.⁽¹⁷⁾ In other words, the conflict between the elite and the state plays an important role in forming the prospective revolution. In Iran, not only the traditional members of the elite were opposed to the Shah's regime, but also a part of the modern elite, who had been pushed away from power, were discontented.

Another aspect of theories about revolution relates to the role of ideology in such events. S.N. Eisenstadt noted that the main role of ideologies in revolutions is to bring together diverse grievances and interests under a simple and appealing set of symbols of opposition.⁽¹⁸⁾ Therefore, any ideology that features a strong tension between good and evil, emphasizes the importance of combating evil in

this world through the active remaking of the world, and sees politics as simply one more battlefield between good and evil may serve as the foundation for a revolutionary ideology.

In general, one can recognize some degree of similarity between the revolution in Iran and all three major schools in the study of revolutions.⁽¹⁹⁾ For instance, all of Goldstone's remarks are correct in the case of the Iranian revolution, except proposition number 9. Military leaders in Iran did not play a significant role and had been neutralized right after the revolution. It may explain the lack of the Thermidor phase in Iran, according to Brinton's theory.

However, peculiarities should not be ignored. Some of the uncommon characteristics of the Iranian revolution, which these theories do not address are the specific form of religious ideology, the anti-modernist direction of the post-revolutionary regime, and political independence from all major powers in the world. In this study, the role of religious ideology in Iranian revolution will be elaborated. However, one must bear in mind the following statement of J. A. Goldstone about revolutions:

Yet the study of revolutions remains much like the study of earthquakes. When one occurs, scholars try to make sense of the myriad of data that have been collected, and build theories to account for the next one. Gradually, we gain a fuller understanding of them and of the conditions behind them; but the next one that occurs still surprises us. Our knowledge of revolutions, like that of earthquakes, is still limited. (20)

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Design

This research has been based on the available data analysis. In this respect, the researcher used secondary sources to explore how other studies might be relevant to the hypothesis, and whether or not they can support it. Access to such sources was generally satisfactory, partially because of the importance of the Iranian revolution for social change theories, and partially because of the current nature of the experience. This phenomenon does not yet belong to the past; moreover, it is continuing as a live process of social change. As such, it is useful for developing various interpretations and theories about revolutions.

This fact affected at least part of the data, which was based on gathering information about everyday life in Iranian society. To indicate and measure the dimensions of repression in the society, the researcher needs to consider what is going on currently, and because of the continuous trend of consolidation of the Islamic regime, major changes or political events inside the country could be significant and influential for this study.

Another part of the data, which is the main part, relies on recent studies about the Iranian revolution of 1979 and after. Because of the character of the hypothesis, the researcher was interested in only a relatively short period of time, from the summer of 1981, when the wide scale repression began to the present. However, studying a year and a half period before that seemed necessary because everything happening later was directly related to that time. In short, the researcher had to study the total period of the existence of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Data collected for this purpose consisted of analytical studies about the total process of the revolution, which were conducted by both Iranian and Western authors. In some cases, a collaboration had taken place, which had interesting results. Most of the data have been written in English, even those by Iranian authors. The first portions of data sources were largely newspaper and magazine articles in Farsi or English; a second portion consists of books and pamphlets. The reliability of these materials is relatively high because they include most of the existing books.

Finally, the last part of the data body has been composed of reference books about theories of revolution. In this respect, even some old sources, such as Brinton's famous book, The Anatomy of Revolution, written in 1938,

has been used. These materials provided the theoretical approach to revolution, which was outlined in Chapter Two. The theoretical context has been constructed in a fashion similar to Goldstone's approach to the studies of revolutions. Although his classification has been accepted, the focus has been only on those theories which seemed to be relevant to this study. Those include the theories of Skocpol, Tilly, Davies, Eisenstadt, Gurr, and Brinton.

Measurement

Religious ideology is an independent variable in this study. Specific definition of this variable is crucial in measuring the dimensions of the role played by religious ideology in the Iranian revolution and requires consideration of the following:

- 1) the popularity and influence of Islam among the masses of people,
- 2) the main characteristic of such ideology as the sole right of the clergy to rule the country,
- 3) the abilities of the clergy to both influence the people, and make use of their traditional country-wide organizational structure.

Two other major concepts and variables (consolidation and repression) have been formed, mainly based on the common content of these terms in famous materials on social revolutions. Not only are they characteristic of different phases in most of the analyzed revolutions such as the French, Russian, and Chinese, but these concepts are also reflected in most of the recent sources which analyzed the Iranian revolution.

Repression is measured by such factors as: 1) the number of executions of the political opponents, 2) the number of political prisoners, 3) the level of torture, 4) the destruction of the opposition parties, 5) the military invasion of ethnic minorities, and 6) the lack of respect for human rights (freedom of speech, freedom of beliefs, freedom of publication, etc.).

The measurement of consolidation is based on: 1) such attempts by the regime to establish appropriate institutions in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, and 2) the position of the leadership and the role of Islamic ideology.

Separate from the theoretical chapter, almost all of the sources are very current and date from 1982 to 1988. This increases the accuracy level of this study; however, as mentioned before, much as current political incidents in Iran affect the study, the accuracy of such information

decreases. But the major body of the study is basically independent of such fluctuation, and, therefore, the general accuracy of the study seems to rate high. This is important, especially when considering that a convergent tendency about the main concepts is observable.

The procedure of this study began with an overall analysis of recent books about the Iranian revolution of 1979. The main focuses were on the post-revolutionary regime and its new institutions. Political conflicts among both the various factions of the regime and between the opposition and the regime received special consideration. The way in which fundamentalist followers of Khomeini dealt with their opponents, within the government or outside of it, emphasized the significance of repression prevailing in such political groups.

CHAPTER FOUR

ISLAMIC THEOCRACY

This chapter reflects the body of the study and consists of four interrelated sections. First, the meaning and role of the Islamic ideology will be introduced, and the widespread influence of the clergy through its traditional organizations will be explained. Second, the turning-point for consolidation of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be discussed, and the establishment of several political organizations will be considered as they relate to the consolidation. Third, the dimensions of political repression will be discussed. And finally, in an analytical discussion, the interrelationship between the above-mentioned variables will be discussed.

Role of the Islamic Ideology

The term "Islamic ideology" has been widely used since the turn of the century. Most recently, it was applied to the ideological foundation of the Islamic revolution in Iran. Although it has been so widely used that no one questions its conceptual legitimacy, it will be helpful to

make a few clarifications. Islam refers to such doctrinal beliefs based upon the Koran traditions. This doctrine constitutes the foundations of both Islamic culture and civilization. Ideology refers to a set of interrelated conceptions and notions of political commitment and mobilizations. The main role of an ideology is to find an interpretation of the existing relations of power and possible ways of changing them.

During the 1979 Iranian revolution, the Islamic ideology was not the ideology of the dominant class, but the ideology of a section of the revolutionary movement. The Islamic ideology was the logical, and perhaps inevitable, outcome of an Islamic ethics and politics on the one hand, and the influence of western ideological concerns on such conceptions as church-state relations, the class struggle, socialism, capitalism, imperialism, liberalism, and so on, on the other hand.

Shiah Islam (the doctrine of Imamate) has been capable of providing a doctrinal rationale for socio-political protest against the established order. According to the Shiah branch of Islam, after Mohammad there had been twelve successors, each called an Imam (leader), who led the Islamic society. Shiahs believe that the Imam had divine knowledge and had the primary task to perfect people's understanding of the prophetic revelations. They believe

that the twelfth Imam did not die, but disappeared, and will return to lead the Islamic world. This idea (the occultation of the Imam) gave rise to different interpretations and controversies among the clergy about the role of religion on politics before the return of the "Hidden Imam." But, Shiahs all generally believe that people can be either Mojtaheh (leaders) or Mogaleh (followers). There is no position in between. Obviously, there are only a few people who can achieve the high level of religious leadership, the Mojtaheh. The others, who are categorized as Mogaleh, must obey the orders of their religious leaders. They can choose one of the existing leaders as their Mojtaheh.

Velayat Faqih

The role of religion in the Islamic regime has been one of the main peculiarities of the revolution in Iran. Islamic fundamentalism, like many totalitarian ideologies, provides its believers with a sense of mission and attributes a sense of the sacred to human individuals in society. A major characteristic of this ideology is the way it approaches politics. The regime wanted to politicize all aspects of social and even private life. As Khomeini himself emphasized, "There is not a single topic

in human life for which Islam has not provided instruction and established norms." (1) Based on such ideas, Khomeini formulated the doctrine of Velayat Fagih in 1970, and explained it after the revolution as "the principle of government. The organizational structure of government.... I wanted to make it clear that government[governing] is the right of the religious jurists." (2)

Khomeini's conception of Imamate is that of a concrete model for the Islamic government. The concept of Velayat Fagih constitutes a radical departure from the classical Shiah Islam view of government. In his innovative interpretation of traditional religious texts, Khomeini proclaimed that politics had displaced theology, and political goals had acquired priority over theological concerns. (3) What he suggested in his doctrine was a centralized hierarchy of religious leaders who govern the society. All powers, according to him, should be monopolized in the hands of one or a few religious leaders. (4) This inflamed a controversy among the religious leaders from the beginning, but after the success of the revolution and the imposition of Khomeini as its uncontested leader, the suitable conditions for forming his idea about the government were provided. The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran is based on the doctrine of Velayat Fagih, and Khomeini himself occupied the position

of sole leader of the Islamic government. He was seen as the Hidden Imam; however, he actually had more power than the Imam. (5)

Khomeini attributes to the religious leaders all the political rights of the Imams and the Prophet and demands complete obedience to his rule. He grants legitimacy to his theory of the Velayat Fagih by unequivocally declaring the religious leaders the rightful successor to the Imams.

Velayat Fagih thus constitutes the ideology of Khomeini Shi'ism. It is an ideology that is explicit in identifying who raises the social issues in the society, and who will deal with them.

Traditional organization of the clergy

Now, inevitable questions arise: How were pro-Khomeini clergy able to organize the masses of people to support the ideas of the government? What kinds of organization had their leadership established? The key to the answers is in the traditional organization of the clergy. It has been estimated that in 1979, there were 180,000 clergymen and 80,000 mosques throughout the country. During the period of the revolution, most of these were under the influence of Khomeini's followers. At that time, almost a year before the victory of the revolution, Khomeini was speaking

in the name of Islam in general, and he deliberately did not emphasize his specific interpretation of Islam in order to achieve unity. He played the role of a sacred man in opposition to "the evil role" of the Shah.

The significance of such traditional organization will be understood only when one bears in mind the reality of dictatorship during the Shah's rules in which no political opposition party was allowed to exist. Although most mosques in the network were not politically oriented, when time arrived and the political atmosphere spread throughout the country, this network became a helpful organization for the Khomeini's followers. All of the statements and speeches of Khomeini were distributed through the mosques, mostly by the clergy.

After the revolution, when the Islamic regime was established, an informal institutional structure consisting of the religious network played the role of a central revolutionary organization. It has considerable resources, including financial support from pro-Khomeini top clergy, and cadets from the theological seminaries. Even after other forms of organization were established to consolidate the Islamic regime, this traditional religious network continues to exist. It also became more complex than before and played an even more significant role in bringing the Islamic ideology into the people.

The creation of the Islamic Republic of Iran based on Khomeini's doctrine not only provoked opposition for other major Ayatollahs in the Shiah world, but it also caused some disagreements among the fundamentalists. For instance, the Hojattieh Association, which had substantial roots among the clergy and policymakers of the Islamic Republic, did not share the idea of Velayat Fagih with those in the Islamic Republican Party and the other followers of Khomeini. Members of the Hojattieh Association follow Khomeini as a political and religious leader, but not as an Imam, who substitutes for the Hidden Imam. Although the Association was dissolved before the Islamic Republican Party, its members' roles remained unchanged and continued to influence the policy.

Khomeini and other leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran have always put extreme emphasis on the role of ideology in the revolution and have encouraged people to emphasize spirituality instead of materialism and greed. But they also were aware of the fact that such ideas alone were not a stable basis for the consolidation of their regime. They knew that consolidation required the institutionalization of clerical rule, and could only be achieved on the authority of Shiah Islamic law. Therefore, the legitimacy of the theocratic government had to be established as a new part of the Shiah faith. Also, a suitable mechanism needed

to be created for the selection of Khomeini's successor(s). For this purpose, and under the guidance of Khomeini himself, Ayatollah Montazeri was promoted as a Grand Ayatollah in 1983 and designated as the successor to Khomeini. This was followed by a country-wide propaganda campaign to convince the public of such a transformation in the event of Khomeini's death.⁽⁶⁾

Consolidation of the Islamic Regime

Based on such a religious ideology, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been consolidated as a political regime. In this regard, three major points will be discussed. First, there will be a discussion of the turning point in the general policy of the regime which began in 1982, when Khomeini issued a decree to protect the rights of every citizen. Before that, there were no such rights; uncertainty of the future had made the Islamic leadership resort to any policy in order to sustain their regime. Issuing such decree, therefore, can be seen as an important sign of the stabilization of the regime.

The second point to be discussed is the establishment of various political organizations. This shows the

abilities of the fundamentalists to build their government apparatus as a stable regime. They were successful in forming appropriate organizations in all branches of government: the executive, legislative, and judicial.

The third part of the discussion is devoted to examining the Islamic Republican Party as a major political party in forming the Islamic regime.

Turning point

On December 15, 1982, Khomeini issued a decree to guarantee the security of all Iranian citizens from arbitrary arrest and confiscation of property, and to promote the restoration of law and order. This decree described the necessity of "a judicial revolution to protect the dignity and honor of individuals." It consisted of eight points, and was titled, "Islamization of the Judiciary."⁽⁷⁾

According to Point Four of the decree, people cannot be arrested or summoned without a judge's order. It also states that arrest or summon by force is illegal. Point Six states that nobody is allowed to enter anyone's home, shop, or private place of business without the owner's permission. To arrest, pursue or detain anybody on the pretext of uncovering an offense or sin is against the law.

It is also forbidden to insult somebody, to carry out non-Islamic or inhumane actions, to eavesdrop on another's telephone conversations, listen to another's tapes for the purpose of uncovering an offense, a center of sin, or a place of crime, or to spy on other people's sins. The final point, the decree concluded that,

from now on, which is the time for stability and construction, the nation must feel secure and at peace, and should realize that judicial power is at its service in the enforcement of Islamic laws and regulations.⁽⁸⁾

In other words, the decree calls for the operation of executive forces, implying that there had been no law enforcement or security for individuals until then. It claimed that, from that time on, every thing would be under the control of the judicial system.

Most observers view this decree as a turning point in the strategy of the Islamic government in dealing with its opponents. It also indicates a transformation into the phase of stabilization and consolidation of the regime. The first reason to believe such a significant inference is that what the decree says contradicts everything the Islamic leaders, above all Khomeini, stated before about individual rights. In fact, in pursuing opposition groups in 1981, Khomeini had encouraged his followers to do everything on behalf of Islam, even spying. Anti-opposition propaganda encouraged school children to spy on their parents and ordered parents to report

unfaithful children, who might be active in opposition groups. Thus, one may conclude that, at the time of issuing the decree, leaders of the Islamic regime felt more safety and stability for their government than a year before that.

The sincerity of the regime to follow the decree's orders reflects the overall situation of the government, to some extent. In the two weeks following the decree, twenty-four special teams were sent to the provinces to investigate grievances, and six revolutionary prosecutors, one commander of the Revolutionary Guards, and some other functionaries were dismissed.⁽⁹⁾ In March 1983, as an act of mercy, a group of ordinary prisoners was released.⁽¹⁰⁾ On May 19, 1983, the head of the Commission for the Pursuance of the Decree of Iran announced that over 160,000 complaints had been filed in the five months since the decree. A few days later, the dissolution of the commission was announced and normalization began.⁽¹¹⁾

Prime Minister Mousavi called the decree "a historic turning point" and "a new phase in the revolution,"⁽¹²⁾ and the Supreme Court Chief, Mousavi-Ardebili, explained that "the regime could rely on the sword only to a certain degree. In other cases, reliance should be on justice, logic, faith, and knowledge....Encouragement should be

given to an individual's fear of justice rather than the sword." (13)

One of the main purposes of the decree was to attract the support of modern middle classes, who were feeling impotent and dejected. The regime needed the skills and technical abilities of these people to build its economy. Even then there was continuous talk about attracting the technical cadres and skilled manpower that had left the country. Khomeini said that "Nobody should be afraid to come back and engage in business. We promise that, as long as there is Islam there will be free enterprise also." (14) Another sign of normalization was the decision to reopen universities on December 18, 1982. However, it was done in stages: medical, agricultural, engineering and technical faculties opened first, and the humanities and the arts last. Also in February of 1983, the authorities announced the resumption of the issue of exit visas, which had been suspended after the Gulf War. (15)

Establishment of the political organizations

Besides all the signs of normalization, one may expect to examine true consolidation of a regime by its political organizations. One may measure consolidation of the new regime based upon the abilities and the forms of new

political organizations. According to their roles, these organizations can be divided in the three major categories: the executive branch, including the army, police, security agencies, and other organizations of the armed forces; the judicial branch; and the legislative branch. The following evidence shows a successful movement towards establishing stable organizations in the Islamic government in Iran.

During the revolution and right after the overthrow of the Shah, the strongest resistance against the revolution was expected from the army. In spite of the purges and executions of military generals, Islamic leaders knew that the army had been the main support of the monarchy. It was well organized and equipped by American advisors and accessories. Therefore, an extensive purge of the armed forces, called "Islamizing," began in September 1979, and resulted in the discharge of some 12,000 military personnel, who were mostly officers.⁽¹⁶⁾ In response to this action, two military coups were organized by some military officers during the summer of 1980. The first was uncovered in June 1980 and the second, a more serious conspiracy, in July. A total of 600 officers was arrested, and over 100 of them were executed.⁽¹⁷⁾ But this did not prevent the army personnel from other conspiracies. In 1982, some 70 officers were executed for involvement in a plot led by Sadeg Qotbzadeh, a former member of the

Revolutionary Council and the chief of the National Radio and Television, to overthrow Khomeini.⁽¹⁸⁾ And on May 27 of the same year, five high-ranking officers of the air force were arrested for conspiracy to bomb Khomeini's residence.⁽¹⁹⁾ By the end of 1983, all such attempts were foiled, and clerical control over the army was secure.

This control was enforced through different organizational elements. In the first place, it was reinforced through a political-ideological department in the military, which was manned by young and dedicated clergymen. They educated the military personnel in Islamic history and ideology. Also, there were some voluntary organizations, called Islamic Associations, in all work places. They concerned themselves with raising the Islamic consciousness of their employees and guarding the security of their units.

In November 1982, the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps ministry was created, and by 1984, all security matters were clearly left to them.

In spite of all these attempts to control the army, the clergy focused on the development of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards to create a counterforce to the army. This military organization, which was established by the clergy right after the revolution, became the strongest arm of the Islamic regime in dealing with its opponents. The

active contribution of the Revolutionary Guards in the war against Iraq made it a trained force. In early 1983, it was 170,000 strong, and included both ground and air forces.(20)

This increased the friction between the army and the Revolutionary Guards. But the clergy was behind the Revolutionary Guards, and finally, in September 1985, Khomeini sounded the death knell of the regular army by issuing a decree for the creation of ground, air, and naval branches of the Revolutionary Guards to replicate those of the regular army. This was possible because 1) the army had been neutralized soon after the revolution through the execution and purgation of its generals, 2) Khomeini's orders have always been the final words and had the most executive power, and 3) the substitution of the army by the Revolutionary Guards has been planned from the beginning by Khomeini's followers. By the summer of 1987, the naval branch of the Revolutionary Guards, through a big military maneuver, had made itself conspicuous in the waters of the Persian Gulf.(21)

Other organizations, which sprung up from the heat of the revolutionary struggle were the Revolutionary Komitehs (committees). They were formed spontaneously from the grassroots and traditional networks of the clerics and craftsmen, retailers and youth of the city quarters.

Pro-Khomeini clergymen organized these committees through the local network of mosques and based on their personal influence among the people in each quarter. During the revolutionary period, they were formed spontaneously; however, after the victory of the revolution, they became well organized, armed, and under the complete control of the pro-Khomeini clergy.

The Komitehs' duties varied, from keeping the internal security to enforcing Islamic morality. In late 1982, more than 6,000 Komitehs were active all over the country (22) and, because of their relative autonomy, Islamic leaders decided to centralize them under the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior. At the time, there was some friction between the Komitehs and the Revolutionary Guards in dealing with some of their common duties, such as fighting against the opposition. But the Minister of the Interior put a commission in charge of working out a satisfactory division between the functions of the Komitehs, the Revolutionary Guards, and the police. In May 1983, a nationwide gathering of the heads of the Komitehs was organized to discuss the rationalization of the organization and coordination of functions with other forces of law enforcement. By 1984, security matters were clearly left to the Revolutionary Guards, and the Komitehs assumed charge of smuggling offenses and dealing with the

drug traffickers.⁽²³⁾ Police forces had no authority in those areas and became involved only in non-political matters, such as robbery, burglary, or beating.

The judicial system and the law were changed radically after the revolution. The courts had been set up under clerical judges. After the installation of the theocratic government and a movement toward the integration and rationalization of the power structure in 1982, there was an attempt to integrate the revolutionary courts into the Ministry of Justice. However, the attempt was over-ruled by Khomeini, under the explanation that such an integration would jeopardize the reputation and the future of the revolution.⁽²⁴⁾ What really was behind this vague phrase was the fact that the regime needed the swift and deadly justice of the courts in dealing with its opponents. In fact, Revolutionary Courts were necessary to the survival of the Islamic theocracy, not only to destroy the opposition groups, but also to fight against the profiteering and hoarding that they called "economic terrorism" which threatened the economy. In spite of all these efforts, the necessity for consolidation convinced Khomeini to allow the integration of the Revolutionary Courts into a unified judiciary system. On January 22, 1984, the Prosecutor General, Musavi Tabrizi, announced the

integration of the Revolutionary Courts into the Ministry of Justice and then, in February of the same year, the president of the Supreme Judiciary Council, Ayatollah Musavi Ardabili, expressed his satisfaction with the absorption of the courts into the ministry and stated that the judiciary of Iran had become 80 percent Islamic.⁽²⁵⁾

The parliament was the last institution which was taken over by the Ayatollahs. From the beginning, the majority of delegates were clergymen or their followers; however, the minority consisted of liberals and nationalists, who, relying on their knowledge of the modern legislation, were serious rivals for the clergy. But, when the first Islamic Majles completed its term in 1984, those amateur deputies had become expert parliamentarians. The speaker, Hashemi Rafsanjani, not only was re-elected for the next two terms in 1984 and 1988, but also became the second most powerful man in Islamic Iran, after Khomeini. The parliament began its second period with impressive vigor and efficiency, demonstrating its independence by not approving several members of the Cabinet, presented to it by Prime Minister Musavi, in August 1984.⁽²⁶⁾ It also demonstrated extensive legislation.

Consolidation of the Islamic regime would not be completed if appropriate economic organization did not take place. Although analyzing the economic aspect of the regime is not the intent of this study, a brief review of the newly established organizations in economics will be necessary.

A huge institute, the Mustazafin Foundation, took control of some public properties after the revolution. These included all properties of the Shah's family, the Pahlavi's, estimated at one-fifth of the total private assets in Iran.⁽²⁷⁾ Also, the foundation took control of over 100 multi-million dollar business enterprises. By July 1983, the Foundation owned 495 companies, of which 200 were manufacturing firms, 250 trading companies, and 49 agro-industrial companies. The Foundation employed over 85,000 people, far more than the number of employees of the National Iranian Oil Company.⁽²⁸⁾

Through organizations, such as the Mostazafin Foundation, the clergy controlled the economy and reinforced their ruling position. Some other organizations, such as the Housing Foundation, the Commission for Economic Mobilization, the Commission for the Reconstruction and Renovation of the War Zones, and the Holy War for Reconstruction, played significant roles and helped to spread and consolidate Islamic rule across the

country. Among these, the Holy War for Reconstruction, for example, set up some 37,000 educational classes to teach ideology and 28,000 classes for teaching Arabic and the Koran, and distributed large quantities of books, magazines, films, tapes, and nearly three million posters in rural areas by 1984.⁽²⁹⁾ All these materials included religious propaganda to achieve support for the government. It also claimed to have built 30,000 kilometers of roads, 12,000 bridges, and to have brought electricity to over 5,000 and water to over 6,000 villages, and to have sent 67,000 medical groups to villages by March 1985.⁽³⁰⁾

All this shows the process of national integration and the penetration of the clerical government into the rural areas. This process was a part of the consolidation of the Islamic regime.

Islamic Republican Party

Soon after the revolution, fundamentalists organized themselves into the Islamic Republican Party. This organization played a significant role in the process of the consolidation of Khomeini's regime. It is possible to distinguish two phases of the party. In the first period, the major purpose of the founders was to create an alternative organization opposing their political rivals, such as the Mojahedin and secular liberals. For this

purpose, Ayatollah Mohammad Beheshti, who was the most charismatic leader of the party and the second most powerful man after Khomeini (he died in the explosion of party headquarters in June 1981), quoted the insistence of Khomeini in declaring the party's establishment as soon as possible.⁽³¹⁾ Therefore, the Islamic Republican Party was announced one week after the declaration of the Islamic Republic.

All evidence seems to indicate that Khomeini intended a fundamentalist-dominated government from the beginning. In this respect, his view was consistent; he always believed that the actual power of government should belong to him and the fundamentalists. If he chose a secular and modernist government right after the overthrow of the Shah's regime, it was because of the necessity of buying time for organizing the fundamentalists. To them, the modernists were a kind of hired help with specialized skills, who could manage some governmental affairs until the clergy achieved enough ability to enforce their power over all ruling areas. Beheshti reported that Khomeini had asked him and the IRP leaders several times during 1979 whether they could form the government, but they had responded that they were not ready yet. Beheshti explained that a "party's government should be a completely independent government and should have a specified program, and we have not reached that stage yet."⁽³²⁾ Beheshti also

indicated that Khomeini had instructed the party to do everything they could to get as many seats as possible in the parliament.⁽³³⁾

In the second phase, the IRP managed the consolidation process by leading the regime's organizations. This was possible because of Khomeini's complete support of the party. In this period, every aspect of governmental affairs was organized through the party, and it became the core of all organizations. Among the Revolutionary Guards, Komitehs, parliament, religious leaders, and also within voluntary organizations, like the Islamic Associations, the members of the IRP were either the majority or the most influential portion of these organizations. In general, the Islamic Republican Party became the political power of the fundamentalist clergy and followers of Khomeini. After the destruction of all other political parties, Iran became a one-party system. However, it seems that many clerics considered the party only as a temporary tool on the way toward organizing their Islamic government. One of the accomplishments of the IRP was to organize and mobilize Friday Prayers all over the country. After achieving this and other goals, the existence of the party seemed unnecessary to the fundamentalists. By 1984, it was becoming clear that the Islamic Republican Party would play only a secondary role in the Islamic regime. It was decided to substitute its role in political mobilization

with the Friday Prayers role. Thus, by the end of 1984, the local network of the party was under the supervision of Friday Prayers and, in the summer of 1985, the leadership of the regime decided to reduce the party's activities and close some of its branches. Finally, on June 1, 1987, Khomeini ordered the complete suspension of the activities of the Islamic Republican Party in response to a request by President Khamen'ei and parliament Speaker Hashemi Rafsanjani. These two, who were the only surviving founders of the party, pointed out that the party had achieved its purpose of establishing the Velayat Fagih and the distinctive organizations of the Islamic Republic of Iran.⁽³⁴⁾

In short, the Islamic Republic of Iran was under the complete control of the fundamentalists, who consisted of different factions of the clergy. However, they were united under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini. They have attempted to consolidate their power through a process of ideological and functional activities. The result of such attempts has been dramatically successful, according to the effective level of constructing the government and normalizing the Islamic regime.

Repression of the Opposition

In this section, the final variable, repression of the opposition, will be discussed in order to analyze how the Islamic regime has concluded its consolidation process by using power against its opponents. The organized opposition groups will be categorized into four groups: ethnic minorities, Liberals, Mojahedin, and Communists. Unorganized opposition of the people will also be discussed.

In Iran, the dominant group tried to repress its opponents; however, this specific attempt played a crucial role in the power struggle in this society. As was mentioned, one may suspect that the consolidation of the Islamic regime would not have occurred if the clerical power had not used such brutal and continuous repression against every manifestation of the opposition. By looking at the history of Iran, it becomes amazingly evident that every political group which has been able to use maximum intimidation and force against its opponents has had the best chance of dominating the society. The fundamentalists have been aware of this fact; they have successfully used repression against both their political rivals and those masses who did not obey their orders.

The relatively open atmosphere immediately after the revolution caused a widespread attempt by different political groups to organize themselves for the purpose of achieving greater political power. After years of being under the pressure of the despotic regime of the Shah, such an opportunity seemed to be a gift. A mushrooming process of forming various political organizations began and in a few weeks after the overthrow of the Shah's regime, numerous groups with membership ranging from a handful to hundreds of thousands took shape. Inconsistency and the unorganized reality of the new regime in those days provided favorable situations for the growth of political organizations. Among them, such radical groups as Mojahedin and Marxists seemed to have more attraction than the liberals or conservatives. For instance, just ten weeks after the triumph of the revolution, in a demonstration for the anniversary of International Labor Day (May 1st), the Marxist groups⁽³⁵⁾ mobilized approximately five hundred thousand people, mostly students and workers.⁽³⁶⁾

The following is a description of the main opposition forces to the regime.

Ethnic Minorities

Due to the multi-ethnic nature of the Iranian population,⁽³⁷⁾ a complex political scene existed, and the resistance of ethnic minorities to the central regime was a significant threat. Immediately after the revolution, two regions of ethnic minorities erupted in rebellion. The Kurdish province, Iran's third most populated ethnic region, demanded internal autonomy. And the agriculturally rich region of Gonbad, home to the Turkman people, experienced a bloody fight between the Revolutionary Guards and Turkmen.⁽³⁸⁾

In Kurdistan, the movement for autonomy has a long history. This ethnic group has been divided into three parts, and each has been governed under a separate central authority (Iran, Turkey, and Iraq). In Iran, the traditional political organization, which was suppressed by the Shah's regime was the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), established in 1947. This organization achieved the most popularity among the Kurds and controlled most parts of central and northern Kurdistan. Another major organization was called Komalah and took control of the southern part of Kurdistan. The Komalah was an independent communist organization, which later formed the recently established Communist Party of Iran. Even though

the KDP was a nationalist organization which had certain problems with the Komoleh, they worked together in an armed struggle against the Islamic regime from the beginning.

Both the fundamentalists and the secular liberals, who shared the power in the first months of the existence of the Islamic Republic, agreed to suppress the Kurds brutally. When people across the country were celebrating their first new year with no monarch, children, women, and peasants of Kurdistan were murdered by the bullets and bombs of the revolutionary government.⁽³⁹⁾

A few months later, in Turkman Sahra, a land reform movement, controlled by the leftist group of Fedaiyan Khalgh, was repressed by the Revolutionary Guards. Turkman peasants, with leftist stimulation, attempted to confiscate the land of the big landlords. Such violent confrontation was not limited to the Kurds or Turkmen. The pressure on the other ethnic minorities, who demanded some degree of autonomy, began immediately after the Islamic government seized power.

The largest minority group lives in Azarbaijan, where conflicts with central government have been the most problematic in the past. At the time of the revolution, people of this region played a significant role in overthrowing the Shah's regime, even though ethnic problems had been reduced due to a combination of assimilation and

repression. Nonetheless, the nationalism of the Azarbaijanis was reflected in their support of the Ayatollah Shariatmadari. Shariatmadari was the most influential religious leader inside the country when Khomeini was in exile before the revolution. His religious position was even higher than that of Khomeini, and he was responsible for saving Khomeini's life during the revolt of 1963.⁽⁴⁰⁾ After Khomeini's takeover, Shariatmadari revealed his disagreement with the doctrine of Velayat Fagih and inevitably became a powerful rival to Khomeini. His followers organized themselves into the Muslim People's Republican Party (MPRP) and tried to present their alternative to the Khomeini's Islamic Republican Party.

Although Shariatmadari was very moderate, even conservative, in his political views, this did not protect him from the hostility of Khomeini and his followers. Very soon, some military attacks began against the MPRP and Shariatmadari himself by the Revolutionary Guards. On January 11, 1980, less than a year after the revolution, the MPRP headquarters was attacked by Revolutionary Guards, and four party members were killed. Subsequently, eleven other MPRP members were executed.⁽⁴¹⁾ Some air force personnel at Tabriz, the capital of Azarbaijan, were arrested and charged with planning a coup in the same

month. Under Khomeini's pressure, Shariatmadari was forced to withdraw his support for the MPRP, and the party was dissolved. He himself became imprisoned in his home after his name was linked to Sadig Qotbzadeh's alleged plot against the regime in April 1982.(42)

Liberals

Other political rivals for the fundamentalists were the traditional nationalists, who were organized in the National Front and the Freedom Movement. These secular groups, along with individuals who had similar political views, shared government power with the clergy during the first few months after the triumph of the revolution. This period, which ended in June 1981, is known as dual sovereignty. The first cabinet of the new regime consisted largely of members of the National Front and the Freedom Movement. Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan was a well-known figure on the recent political scene of Iran. He was a moderate secular opponent of the Shah who sympathized with the Islamic ideology. Thus, Khomeini trusted him enough to use him in the government, until the clergy could consolidate its monopoly of power. He was the leader of the Freedom Movement.

The National Front, was found by Mohammad Mosadegh, former Prime Minister, who nationalized oil industries for the first time in early 1950's. It was a nationalist and pro-modernist organization. Mosadegh's followers were involved in the revolution of 1979. In their view, the clerics were not suited for political power. Much like the traditional bourgeoisie, who were mainly merchants of Bazar, they advocated in the separation of state and religion. To them Khomeini and the network of the religious structure could play only a short term role. So, they were the first group that was forced to leave political power. The organization did not play an active role after the resignation of its leader, Karim Sanjabi, from the Revolutionary Provisional Government, and soon moved to the margins of the political struggle.

On the second anniversary of the triumph of the revolution, the National Front attacked the Islamic Republican Party leaders as those who deceived the people in the name of Islam and monopolized power. They accused the Islamic Republican Party of trying to abuse the religious sentiments of the masses by branding all its opponents as "enemies of Islam" for the purpose of imposing their sole authority over society.⁽⁴³⁾

Prime Minister Bafargan, on the other hand, attributes the Islamic Republican Party's takeover of all state institutions to a certain type of ideological elitism.

Sectors of the clergy, and the revolutionary youth genuinely believe that only they know what is best for people and the revolution. They are, therefore, impatient with, and intolerant of, all other views, and through their conviction have achieved hegemony over all positions of responsibility and power in the country.(44)

Bazargan is one of the few opponents of the fundamentalists who has survived the repression. This is mainly because of his conservative views and the tolerance he showed in response to all the pressures against him. In 1984, his criticism of the regime indicated that many of the ideas of the fundamentalists had been shaped under the influence of Communists. He was referring to such ideas as the nationalization of banks and industries, radical land and wealth confiscations, and putting workers' committees in charge of enterprises.(45)

Both Bazargan and the National Front underestimated the abilities of Khomeini and his fundamentalist followers. By attributing their policies to the Communists, Bazargan not only exaggerated the role of Communism in Iran, but also misrepresented the fact that it was the Communists who were adopting the slogans of the Islamic movement, reading into them their own notions, rather than the other way around.(46) Also, the reference of the National Front to "the religious sentiment of the people" implies that they

do not believe the fact that Islam has been the accepted ideology of the masses and not nationalism which was the dominant ideology of the movement of 1953.(47)

After the occupation of the American Embassy in Tehran in November 1979 Bazargan resigned, and another turning point in the political scene in favor of the fundamentalists took place. This was the end of the active contribution of the Freedom Movement and the National Front in the government. However, a few figures with similar political tendencies, known as "the Liberals," remained on the scene.

Bani Sadr, who, like Qotbzadeh, was a close advisor to Khomeini during his exile in France, ascended to power and with the support of Khomeini, became the first President of the Islamic Republic, in January 1980. He joined the fundamentalists' attack against Bazargan's cabinet to achieve some credit as a radical figure. However, his fate was not anything more than Bazargan's.

Immediately after his election as president, the power struggle between him and the fundamentalists began. Party leaders intended to monopolize power and push Bani Sadr to a figure-head position, and Bani Sadr was determined to fight back. But he had no organization to support him and could rely only on his popularity and the possibility of getting Khomeini's support. However, Khomeini supported the IRP in opposition to Bani Sadr.

Those events support two major points: first, the idea that all liberal nationalists (including the National Front, Bazargan, and Bani Sadr) were not popular enough to compete with the pro-Khomeini fundamentalists in taking power. Second, Khomeini and his followers had no intention of sharing political power with the liberals or any other groups. If they let the liberals occupy some governmental positions, it was only a temporary tactic for the fundamentalists to buy time and become ready to monopolize power.

Khomeini viewed Bani Sadr, as just like Bazargan and other Liberals, a tool to deal with some specific problem. At the time, he wanted no clergymen in the position of president. But, when the conflict between Bani Sadr and the Islamic Republican Party developed to an antagonistic phase, Khomeini denounced Bani Sadr and soon after that he was dismissed by the parliament and compelled to flee secretly from Iran.

Mojahedin

One of the major political opponents for the fundamentalists has been the radical Islamic organization, the Mojahedin Khalgh. The significance of the Mojahedin was not only their large scale and well organized armed

organization, but also their Islamic ideology. They introduced an alternative interpretation of Islam to the one which Khomeini had presented. The founders of this organization had tried to form their ideas based on a mixture of Islamic beliefs and modern revolutionary ideologies, especially Marxism. They succeeded in attracting young people in huge numbers immediately after the triumph of the revolution. This made the fundamentalists feel threatened, and because of that, the clashes between the two Islamic rivals began in the early days of the revolution.

The Mojahedin, however, tried hard to avoid direct confrontations because of their fear of being denounced by Khomeini. They continued to support Khomeini just before their armed struggle began. They praised Khomeini as the great leader of the revolution in spite of his heedlessness and hostilities toward them. Even four months before the bloody confrontations began, Masood Rajavi, the leader of the Mojahedin, had described Khomeini's role in the revolution in the following words:

The overall historical and social situation necessitated that Ayatollah Khomeini, ...all by himself, should take the responsibility and role of a united front and then, as the leader, the Imam, of the revolutionary masses, take charge of all affairs and responsibilities. (48)

Ironically, the Mojahedin were the first target of Khomeini's followers, soon after the revolution. During the first two and a half years of the Islamic regime, street fights with the Revolutionary Guards and government military attacks against Mojhedin's demonstrations took 70 lives of militants, and about 2,500 Mojahedin members were imprisoned.(49)

In spite of this, the leadership of the Mojahedin continued to support Khomeini. They had several reasons for this. One was that they feared Khomeini's ideological influence among the people. Even though they also based their ideology on Shi'ism. Another reason was that the Mojahedin still hoped to share power through their supporters inside the government.

On June 20, 1981, the Mojahedin held a demonstration in Tehran in support of President Bani Sadr and in protest against the fundamentalists. According to their sources, 500,000 people participated.(50) Violence took some victims on that day, but this time the Mojahedin responded to the violence of the Revolutionary Guards and Hezbollahi groups.(51) Suddenly, the Mojahedin's tactics changed, and they lost all hope for sharing power. They therefore decided to seize power by force. This was probably the most serious challenge for the pro-Khomeini fundamentalists.

This incident was one of the turning points in post-revolutionary Iranian politics. The period between June 1981 and December 1982 was the bloodiest power struggle in the recent history of Iran. During this period, the Islamic regime was able to eliminate most of the organized opposition; however, the price for such achievement was high. In the camp of fundamentalists, a series of explosions and terrors took the lives of more than a thousand leaders of the Islamic regime.⁽⁵²⁾ Among them, Ayatollah Behshi, the founder of the Islamic Republican Party and the second most powerful figure after Khomeini, the new President Rajai, Prime Minister Bahonar, and more than 30 members of the Islamic Parliament were killed.⁽⁵³⁾

In the camp of the opposition, however, the losses were even greater. Thousands were killed, either in street fights or in execution sites. According to a Mojahedin document, by April 1982, 15,000 were killed because of political opposition to the regime, and the number of political prisoners reached 40,000.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Other sources reported similar statistics.⁽⁵⁵⁾ About 90 percent of these victims were members of the Mojahedin, and most of the others belonged to the Communist groups, such as the Fedaiyan Khalgh and the Paykar organizations.

In the period of June 1981 to December 1982 the Islamic theocracy passed decisive tests of survival. It survived the decimation of hundreds of its leaders as a result of the explosions of June and August 1981, and of numerous individual assassinations carried out over a period of fifteen months by the Mojahedin. It also survived a serious setback in the war with Iraq, which involved heavy casualties in the summer of 1982.⁽⁵⁶⁾ But the regime was able to exterminate its organized opposition in the same period. By the fall of 1982, the statement by the Prosecutor General of the Revolutionary Courts that 90 percent of the organized networks of the Mojahedin were destroyed seems to have been fairly realistic, even though a year earlier Hashemi Rafsanjani, speaker of the parliament, claimed that the government had destroyed 90 percent of the "main opposition forces."⁽⁵⁷⁾

The strategy which helped the Islamic regime to survive was based on using maximum power to repress the opposition. During the bloody days of struggle, the leaders of the regime followed the instruction of Khomeini that "disorder does not mean that Islamic rule is weak. Islam is revived through this kind of bloodshed."⁽⁵⁸⁾

One of the peculiarities of the post-revolutionary period in Iran is reflected in the widespread use of terror against the leaders of the Islamic regime, which has not been seen in the French, Russian, or Chinese revolutions.

The continuous waves of bombings and assassinations, which hit deep targets inside the regime, shook the government. After the explosions in the Islamic Republican Party headquarters, the explosions which killed Ayatollah Behshti, President Rajai, and Prime Minister Bahonar, it appeared for a moment that the leaders of the country could be systematically eliminated. Moreover, it appeared as if the opposition could strike at will and had penetrated the innermost sanctums of the government.⁽⁵⁹⁾ In recent history, we may not be able to find similar situations in which such a level of successful operations against a regime had been accomplished. It was a fight over the existence of the Islamic regime. The government responded ruthlessly, suppressing street demonstrations, raiding the "safe houses" of the leftists' organizations, and by mass arrests and executions. Executions of fifty or more a day became routine. Some 149 people, for example, were executed on September 19, 1982 alone, 110 on a single day a week later.⁽⁶⁰⁾ Families of the executed often received mutilated bodies. Mistreatment of prisoners became widespread at Evin prison in Tehran. Mohammadi Gilani, a cleric and chief of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, remarked, "Islam does not allow wounded rebels to be hospitalized. They should be finished off."⁽⁶¹⁾ The prosecutor general, Musavi Tabrizi stated, "We can not

practice forgiveness or leniency, when faced with so many people."(62) In relation to the street fights and the killing of twelve-year-olds, the famous executioner and prosecutor of Evin prison, Asadollah Lajvardi, said, "The age [of those who are executed] does not matter."(63)

In fact, the executions and all other brutalities were the result of deliberate policy and a high-level government decision to crush the incipient rebellion. The Islamic decision makers learned how to use this policy to frighten and intimidate all opponents. The fact that the regime consolidated itself confirms the effectiveness of the policy in not only exterminating all opposition inside the country, but also in preventing people from any protest.

Roles of the Communist Groups

The revolution in Iran created divisions among the Communists, which located some of them in quite opposite political positions. Although most of the Communist organizations supported Khomeini in the beginning of the revolution, very soon they became divided into two major camps. The first one continued to support Khomeini and basically consisted of the Tudeh Party, the traditional Communist party and a completely pro-Soviet organization.

The party, by following its traditional conservative positions among the Communists, and by imitating Soviet foreign policy, planned to support Khomeini and the fundamentalists by any means. This decision was based on a general theoretical approach that considered the fundamentalists to be anti-imperialist, petit-bourgeoisie, and so to be defended against the Liberals and pro-western groups. Because of their analysis, the Tudeh Party used its political experience and organizational abilities to help the fundamentalists repress the opposition. For instance, the Tudeh Party gave the regime information they had collected about the other Communist groups, such as names and locations of people, and this was highly damaging to these organizations.

Even such activities, however, did not endear them enough to the regime to protect their members from the government raid against them in 1983. On February 7, the regime arrested 70 Tudeh Party cadres, including at least fourteen Central Committee members.⁽⁶⁴⁾ The principal charge against them was that they had been spying for the countries of the Eastern Bloc. According to a Tudeh Party spokesman in London, the government had arrested nearly 1,500 party members by early June 1983.⁽⁶⁵⁾

Like some previously arrested opposition leaders, the leaders of the Tudeh Party appeared on television and

confessed to all the charges against them. On April 30, Iranian television showed Noorodin Kianouri, the chief leader of the Tudeh Party admitting to spying for the Soviets, treason against the Islamic Republic, espionage, deceit, treachery, and finally concluding that his people "deserve the most severe punitive actions that the Islamic Republic may decide to mete out." (66)

Other Communist groups, such as the Fedaiyan and Paykar, believed in continuing the revolution, and soon after the new government began to suppress the Kurds, they expressed their opposition by various demonstrations and publications criticizing the government. The majority of these groups did not believe in guerrilla combat and planned to mobilize the masses, especially the workers, toward a Socialist revolution.

When the Mojahedin became involved in a bloody struggle against the government, such Communist groups found themselves unwillingly involved. The government began to oppress all radical organizations in the same way. The Revolutionary Guards assumed that every opposition group had asked for a military confrontation and treated the Communists, who were not organized for such street fights, just like the Mojahedin, and punished them cruelly.

Most of these organizations were destroyed completely, and some of their leaders appeared on television to

repent. In general, the Communist movement in Iran suffered the most from the repression of the Islamic regime, both in terms of organization and ideology.

Suppression of the Masses

In addition to the organized opposition to the Islamic Republic, all manifestations of disharmony and discontent among the masses were also repressed by the fundamentalist forces. Publications and the media experienced the repression first. Thousands of books, which had been censored during the Shah's regime, were destroyed. Hundreds of newspapers and magazines reflecting the short-term freedom of publication in the first months of the revolution were banned. All the political discussions in public were forbidden, and finally, anyone attempting to have or sell "illegal" papers was arrested, beaten or killed.

The Iraq invasion in 1980 helped the Islamic regime justify its repressive policy against the opposition and attract the support of those who were convinced by the government propaganda that the country had been under attack by the superpowers. Nationalism helped the fundamentalists to increase pressure on the masses in all aspects of social life. For example, a shortage of food

products, increasing unemployment, and the execution of opponents were justified in the name of defending the country.

The Islamic regime wanted to have full control over the moral attitudes and political opinions of all its citizens. Khomeini's desire for an intelligence service consisting of the entire nation, and his instructions to students in September 1982 to closely watch their teachers and classmates and report any deviant behavior to authorities, are some reflections of such control.⁽⁶⁷⁾

To enforce their morals and to indoctrinate the masses, the Islamic regime established some specific organizations. In July 1984, the Vigilante Patrols for Combating the Forbidden began operating under the direction of the Central Bureau of the Revolutionary Committee to punish alcohol drinkers and women who did not wear veils.⁽⁶⁸⁾ In September 1982, the counter-revolutionary patrol groups, the Vengeance of God (Sar Allah), were formed to arrest all opponents of the government. They were established when it seemed that the Intelligence Unit of the Revolutionary Guards was inadequate to fight against the Mojahedin and other organized opposition. The success of the Vengeance of God in the cities had inspired the formation of the Army of God (Jund Allah) patrol group in the gendarmerie, to be used for counter-insurgency and

armed smuggling in the countryside. To emphasize the significance of the intelligence service, President Khamenei said, "the intelligence work is as important as being present on the front line of the war." (79)

The ruling clergy, in addition to all arrangements to enforce their rules, also planned a systematic program for the future. They established the proper organizations for Islamic propaganda, especially among youngsters and through the schools. In August 1982, after non-Islamic people were purged from the educational system in 1980 and 1981, the Minister of Education boasted that the 70,000 existing teachers had been familiarized with Islamic ideology. They were to be joined by 18,000 newly trained persons. The textbooks and syllabi had been carefully revised to demonstrate only Islamic fundamentalist points of view. (70)

It is estimated that at the time of the revolution, there were 180,000 clergymen and 80,000 mosques throughout the country. (71) During the decade of the Islamic regime's rules, these numbers have greatly increased and every clergy has been used as Islamic cadre and every mosque has been used as a domicile from which to rule and control every aspect of social life. Hundreds of thousands of youngsters who had been brain-washed by the religious agitation are in the service of the clergy. They are organized through the mosques and work as the eyes and ears of the Islamic government to spy on people and to create an

atmosphere of intimidation. In addition, most of the necessary material goods, such as food, are distributed through the local mosques, which are under the control of the government. For these reasons, people are reluctant to protest against the government. Occasionally, the groups of the Hezbollah march in the streets and harass people for the way they are dressed (especially women), for the music they are listening to, for having parties, for drinking alcoholic beverages, and for other such things prohibited by the regime. In short, there is no aspect of people's lives which is free from the interference of the regime.

Discussion

Analytical Discussion

It is possible to recognize some general characteristics of the Islamic regime are in conformity with the totalitarian regimes in their consolidation phase. However, it is important to keep in mind that some other characteristics may not confirm that pattern. According to J. J. Linz, the essential characteristics of a totalitarian system include a totalist, elaborate, and exclusive ideology; single mass-party rule, but not necessarily a monolithic center of power; and active mobilization of citizens for collective tasks.⁽⁷²⁾

Readers should bear in mind that the duties of the Islamic Republican Party were transferred to the clerical system of government after the dissolution of the party. In fact, the fundamentalists preferred to use their own kind of organization instead of the Western form of party, whereas the cadres and members of the Islamic Republican Party continue to accomplish their duties with the benefit of all their training during the party's life. In spite of this, no one can deny the fact that the no-party system of government is also one of the peculiarities of the post-revolutionary regime in Iran.

Alexander Gerschenkron's formulation more than thirty years ago of the factors for a dictatorship's stability is amazingly similar to what has happened in Iran.

Gerschenkron's factors are as follows:

- 1) maintenance of a permanent condition of stress and strain by a) the existence or creation of enemies, both internal and external, and b) imposing upon the population gigantic tasks that exert strong pressure upon its standards of well-being or, at least, greatly retard improvements in those standards.
- 2) Incessant exercise of dictatorial power.
- 3) Creation of an image of the leader as an incarnation of supreme wisdom and indomitable will-power.
- 4) Reference to an allegedly unchanged and unchangeable value system, by which the action of the state is justified.
- 5) Proscription of any deviating values and beliefs, coupled with threats and acts of repression, sustained and implemented by appropriate organizational devices.⁽⁷³⁾

While the Iranian Revolution shared these characteristics and was similar to other revolutions in many ways, its peculiarities may be even more important to analyze. In that the first groups to seize power in Iran

were nationalist-reformists of the National Front and the Freedom Movement, the Iranian revolution confirmed the natural history theory of revolutions. But contrary to that theory, these groups were not the only powers on the scene. They were accompanied by the fundamentalist clergy from the beginning. In fact, a dual sovereignty prevailed.

Another peculiarity of the Iranian revolution is the fact that about half of the population, those who live in rural areas and are mostly peasants, had been passive during the revolution. According to Eric Hooglund, the majority of peasants were apolitical.⁽⁷⁴⁾ The Islamic regime only raised their religious sentiments, and with that, the peasants showed some sympathy toward the politics. This characteristic makes any theoretical approach to the Iranian experience differ from the major theories, such as Brinton's and even Tilly's theory of revolutions.⁽⁷⁵⁾

The anti-secular and anti-modernist nature of the Islamic revolution also distinguished it from the classical revolutions, such as the French, Russian, or American revolutions.

The natural history model (especially reflected in the works of Brinton) suggests that the radical phase of the revolution, which is usually accompanied by a great dictator, eventually gives way to a phase of the moderate

pursuit of progress within the new status quo. According to that theory, the radicals are defeated, and moderates return to power. But, in Iran, not only did such events not happen after a decade, but also the moderates have shown such a level of inefficiency and weakness that they may not be able to seize power in the predictable future. Or to put in another way, one may conclude that the "Republic of Virtue" is continuing in Iran.⁽⁷⁶⁾

This characteristic explains the significant role of repression during the period, on the one hand, and also reveals an unusual process of consolidation in such a phase, on the other hand. The fundamentalists played the role of radicals in classical revolutions, and, according to the general theory, had to keep the situation in harmony with the phase known as the "Reign of Terror and Virtue." Up to now, the phase of "Thermidor" has not been reached in Iran; therefore, the fundamentalist (Radicals) resorted to repression as a crucial weapon in the way of consolidating their regime. In this respect, it seems that they attempted to secure socio-economic change through ideological propaganda.⁽⁷⁷⁾ Iranians are asked to abandon their cultural habits and previously achieved Western values and to substitute for them the fundamentalist norms of Shiah in its specific form, the Velayat Fagih.

Summary

Some of the major points of this study can be summarized as follows:

- 1) The Iranian revolution has some characteristics similar to those of the major revolutions, such as the French, Russian, or Chinese revolutions. For example, in Iran, as in France (1789), after the overthrow of the old regime, moderates (liberals) took power for a while. Then radicals (fundamentalist followers of Khomeini) put moderates aside and monopolized the power. Also, similar to all three major revolutions, in Iran, monopolization of the power occurred through a bloody process of repressing the other groups.
- 2) However, in Iran, there have been some differences from other major revolutions. For instance, after a decade, no individual, such as Napoleon or Stalin, has appeared. In fact, Khomeini played such a role from the beginning. Another major difference from other revolutions reflects the role of religious beliefs in leading the Islamic regime in its consolidation process. The Iranian revolution has been a revivalistic movement. Also, the anti-modernism and anti-Western characteristics of this revolution make it peculiar, to some extent.

- 3) The Islamic government has been successful in consolidating its regime. Consolidation has been a process in which different organizations developed to accomplish all necessary duties for maintaining the Islamic regime. For example, all three governmental branches (executive, legislative, and judicial) found their appropriate organizations and worked in complex and stable interrelations.
- 4) The regime was successful in repressing the opposition. The Islamic government was able to destroy all organized opposition inside the country, and, also, it was able to intimidate and to silence the masses through an exclusive use of violence and terror.
- 5) To do so, the government relied on the newly established military organization of the Revolutionary Guards, and its secret intelligence agency, SAVAMA. Also, the large numbers of followers of Khomeini helped these official organizations to acquire necessary information about the opponents. This happened when Khomeini and other leaders of the Islamic government ordered their followers to spy and suppress any opposition.

- 6) Therefore, the role of Khomeini as the final arbitrator, and the influence of religious beliefs, which encouraged people to obey every order from the top, played a significant role in repressing opposition to the government.
- 7) The primary factors responsible for the success of the pro-Khomeini fundamentalists in achieving power included effective organization, especially in the executive branch, the use of the power of the masses for repressing the opposition, the reliance on the religious sentiment to justify the repression, the maximum support of Khomeini who was Imam, the representative of God, for many people, and the weakness of all other opposition groups.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

In the process of analyzing the phenomenon of the revolution in Iran, no final conclusion has been reached. This is not only because of the various spectra among theoretical approaches about the revolutions, but also because of the fact that the revolutionary social change in Iran has not ended, and a continuous struggle for consolidation is still in process.

There is a mutual agreement among the various sources that the Islamic regime in Iran has been consolidated to some extent. In general, one may speak of the process of consolidation, in which the regime has tried to meet all those conditions for a completely stable system of government. The consolidation is a process, not only because the regime has accomplished a series of steps toward its stability, but also because it is still continuing to stabilize its existence through a purposeful long-term strategy. This process began at the end of a multiple sovereignty period and may continue in the future. It may reflect the peculiar nature of the Iranian revolution; however, there is no doubt that some crucial phases of consolidation have been successfully

accomplished. Therefore, one may consider the Islamic regime as a consolidated government. This happened through several organizations which provided the necessary instruments to destroy obstacles in the way of forming a theocratic government.

The regime consolidated its power by ruthlessly eliminating rival political parties and political dissent. The fundamentalist government has established some organizations for administering terror and repression. The Revolutionary Guards, the Hezbollah, and the secret intelligence organization, SAVAMA, played a crucial role in extirpating the organized opposition. As a result, several thousand have been killed in street battles or executed by firing squads. Tens of thousands have been arrested, tortured, and imprisoned. A nationwide wave of purges in all public or private institutions deprived many of having a job. Finally, the repressive strategy of the government forced millions of people to leave their homes and live in exile.

During this period, war in foreign policy and repression in interior policy have been the main strategies. Even some of those who supported the system had not been safe. They had to either go to the front line of war or contribute in activities against the opposition and on behalf of the regime. The state officially encouraged an atmosphere of fear and denunciation.

In this respect, the regime relied heavily on the Islamic ideology and propaganda to mobilize mass opinion, intimidate the public, discredit its critics, and maintain a high pitch of public excitement. Therefore, a formidable machinery devoted to the production of ideology and propaganda came into existence.⁽¹⁾

Among the clerical community and the leaders of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Khomeini played the role of final arbitrator. In every aspect of policy and critical questions, his view was decisive. He was the regime's most important asset, giving it legitimacy and continuity in the face of inconsistent policy and changing personnel. Other political leaders have sought to associate themselves and their policies with him in order to gain legitimacy. His supporters have built an image of him as the absolute, wise, and indispensable leader of the nation. Much like other leaders of totalitarian regimes in their phase of consolidation, Khomeini wielded ultimate power. His will could not be questioned, and he allowed the cult of his own person to continue.⁽²⁾ He apparently believed that consolidation occurred when he declared, "We should no longer say that we are in a revolutionary situation."⁽³⁾

EPILOGUE

Scientific approaches do not foretell the events; however, they can predict some events based on indications and hints. In social science there are no guarantees for such predictions. The complexity and vitality of social relations makes it difficult to foresee the future of social changes. Therefore, it is hard to forecast what will happen to the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially because the Iranian society is still experiencing some political unrest and something new happens every day. Recently, for instance, Ayatollah Montazeri was deposed from his position as Khomeini's successor. By such a decision, the leadership of the regime undid all its efforts during the past years to sway the public opinion in favor of Montazeri.

The importance of this decision will be evident when the roles of propaganda and ideology are being considered. The Islamic regime has always relied on these elements to explain its shortcomings and to consolidate itself. From the beginning Khomeini and all other fundamentalist leaders have insisted that the masses revolted just for Islam. In this respect, all other motivations, such as social welfare, liberty, and independence have been denied and, even humiliated. This belief has been imposed by force, on

the one hand, and through continuous propaganda, on the other hand. The clergy showed much efficiency in using such propaganda.

Now, by considering the interpretation of the Iranian leaders of Islam, it is easier to explain what happened in Iran during the last decade. To them, Islam means the avoidance of the mundane, of whatever belongs to the existing world; instead, they encourage people to live for "the Other World," the supernatural world which everybody enters after death. In other words, they encourage people to suffer and tolerate the difficulties of the real world to gain their prosperity and happiness after death.

It should be mentioned that the Iranian masses also were attracted to such beliefs and tried to accept whatever their Islamic leaders promised. But very soon, the reality of social problems, the economic crisis, political repression, and the war with Iraq pushed people far from such idealistic promises, and gradually the influence of religious propaganda decreased. However, it was too late and the fundamentalists had had their chance to consolidate their regime. They misused the people's trust to achieve sufficient time to construct their government.

After the cease fire in the war was declared, the regime was confronted with such serious and undeniable problems as the reconstruction of the post-war society, fiscal shortcomings, and disagreements about Khomeini's

successors. It seems that a general agreement among the fundamentalists will not be easily achieved after the death of Khomeini.⁽⁴⁾ The leadership cannot delay the people's demands for social welfare and freedom in the name of involvement in the war. Besides, according to the salient role of Khomeini in dealing with disputes inside the regime, it seems that his death will play a significant role in future political changes. On the other hand, the fact that all other alternative political rivals for the Islamic regime seem to be unattractive to a majority of Iranians makes it difficult for them to seize the power. Thus, perhaps the most probable political change seems to be a kind of reform within the Islamic camp itself.

But in what direction will these changes shift? Based upon everyday political events, one may recognize two possibilities: the first is the possibility for the moderates, figures like Hashemi Rafsanjani, to take over and share the power with some moderates outside of the regime, such as Mehdi Bazargan, Ahmad Madani, and Bani Sadr. This trend will institute some economic, political, and cultural reform inside the society and will follow much more the tendency toward an open foreign policy, especially towards the West. The stability of the Islamic government seems to be more probable in such a case. The second possibility is a situation much closer to the status quo. The radicals will take over and purge the moderate faction

of the fundamentalists. The social conflict will intensify, and the regime will be confronted with more tension in its foreign relationships. In this case, there will be a greater possibility for the society to move toward radical changes in the form of another upheaval or a civil war. Evidently, in such a situation, the chance for the fundamentalists to stay in power will be less than in the first possibility. Concentrating on the social conditions in Iran, and following the international situation in relation to Iran are critical conditions for analyzing the future of political power in that society, and for developing the theory of social revolution in the most recent revolution.

NOTES

Chapter One:

1. According to official figures presented in the International Conference on Reconstruction of the War Damaged Area of Iran, held at Tehran University March 6-16, 1986, more than five million people have lost their homes and jobs, and from two to five million of these have been forced to migrate to war-free zones. See Hooshang Amirahmadi, "War Damage and Reconstruction in the Islamic Republic of Iran," in Post-Revolutionary Iran, by Hooshang Amirahmadi and Manoucher Parvin, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988).

2. As of September 1985, the total damage to various sectors of the society was more than \$309 billion which is equal to 18.5 years of Iranian oil export earnings. See Amirahmadi.

3. What John Simpson was confronted with in 1987 can be an example of such discontent. He wrote, "More people than before came up to me in the streets, hotels, and offices to say that things were getting worse and to ask that this fact should be properly reported in the West." Inside Iran: Life Under Khomeini's Regime, (N.Y. St. Martin's Press, 1988), p. 352.

4. Involvement of the clergy in politics has a long history in Iran. For example, during the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-16, religious leaders played a significant role. For more information see Said Amir Arjomand, The Turban for the Crown, (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1988), Chapter Two.

5. Both leftists and secular nationalists suffered from defeat of the popular movement of 1951-53. They lost their popularity after the coup of 1953. See Chapter Four of this study.

6. See footnote number 71 in Chapter Four.

7. Hamid Algar, Religion and State in Iran 1785-1906, (Berkeley: U.C. Press, 1969), pp. 20-21.

8. See Chapter Four, section titled "Islamic Republican Party".

9. See Chapter Four, pp. 40-41.
10. Refer to footnote 49, Chapter Four.
11. Refer to footnote 3 in this chapter.

Chapter Two:

1. Sigmund Neumann, "The International Civil War," in Why Revolution?, Clifford T. Paynton and Robert Blackey (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman, 1971), p. 122.
2. Jack A. Goldstone, "The Comparative and Historical Study of Revolutions," Annual Review of Sociology, 1982, pp. 187-207.
3. For example, Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in the world with a per capita income of less than \$100 a year and a population density of 1,517 per square mile. But no revolution has occurred for a long time. See The Current History Encyclopedia of Developing Nations, (McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1982), p. 195.
4. After World War II, only five out of 24 countries in South and East Asia were involved in major revolutionary changes (China, Vietnam, Korea, Laos, and Kampuchea). And in Africa, only 7 out of 38 undeveloped countries faced revolution. See Ibid.
5. The latest example of this is Iraq. See Majid Khadduri, The Gulf War, (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1988).
6. Goldstone, p. 188.
7. Lyford P. Edwards, The Natural History of Revolution, (Chicago: Chicago Press, 1927).
8. George S. Pehee, The Process of Revolution, (New York: Harper and Row, 1938).
9. Crane Brinton, The Anatomy of Revolution, (NY: Vintage, 1965).
10. Goldstone, pp. 189-192.
11. J. C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," American Social Review, 27: 5-19, 1962.

12. T. R. Gurr, Why Men Rebel, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).
13. N. J. Smelser, Theory of Collective Behavior, (N.Y. Free Press, 1963).
14. C. Johnson, Revolutionary Change, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966).
15. Charles Tilly, Does Modernization Breed Revolution? Comp. Pol. S: 425-47, 1973 and From Mobilization to Revolution, (MA: Addison-Wesley, 1978).
16. Goldstone, p. 192.
17. Theda Skocpol, State and Social Revolutions, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
18. S. N. Eisenstadt, Revolution and the Transformation of Societies: A Comparative Study of Civilizations, (NY: Free Press, 1978).
19. See Chapter Four, analytical discussion.
20. Goldstone, p. 205.

Chapter Four:

1. Ruh Allah Khomeini, "Islamic Government" in Islam and Revolution, (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981).
2. Arjomand, (An interview with Ayatollah on January 2, 1979), p. 148.
3. Mangol Bayat, "Shi'a Islam as a Functioning Ideology in Iran: The Cult of the Hidden Imam," in Iran Since The Revolution, edited by Barry M. Rosen, (Boulder: Colombia University Press, 1985) pp. 21-28.
4. Khomeini, "The Islamic Government," p.58.
5. In Shiah, the Twelveth Imam is believed to be occulted and will be returned someday to save the people and the world.
6. Arjomand, p. 162.
7. Text of decree in Iran Times January 7, 1982.

8. Ibid.
9. Said Amir Arjomand, The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran, (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 161.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Dilip Hiro, Iran Under the Ayatollahs, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Publication, 1985), p. 224.
13. Ibid.
14. Sunday Times, 9 January 1983.
15. Hiro, p. 226.
16. Arjomand, p. 164.
17. G. F. Rose, "The Post-Revolutionary Purge of Iran's Armed Forces: A Revisionist Assessment." Iranian Studies, Vol. 17, Nos. 2-3, 1984, pp. 185-86.
18. The Times, August 17, 1982.
19. International Herald Tribune, May 27, 1983.
20. Hiro, p. 251.
21. Arjomand, p. 166.
22. "In late 1982, there were 6,137 Komitehs in the Country." Hiro, p. 252.
23. Arjomand, p. 165.
24. Ibid, p. 166.
25. Ettela'at, 4 and 6 February 1984.
26. Arjomand, p. 165.
27. The Iranian, 17 October 1979, p. 5.
28. Hiro, p. 253.
29. Salnameh 1362, 1983-84: 722-23, 737.

30. Kayhan Havai, special issue, 12 February 1986.
31. Islamic Republican Party, "Az Hizb Cheh Midanim" (What Do We Know About the Party?), (Tehran: Published by the Central Office of the IRP, 1979).
32. Ibid, p. 33.
33. Cheryl Benard and Zalmay Khalilzad, The Government of God: Iran's Islamic Republic. (N.Y.: Columbia University Press), 1984.
34. Arjomand, p. 151.
35. Basically Fedaiyan and Paykar.
36. Ayandegan, May 2, 1979.
37. According to different sources, the Iranian minorities (ethnic and religious) constitute more than half of the total population. For instance, see Leonard Helfgol, "The Structural Foundation of the National Minority in Revolutionary Iran," Iranian Studies, 1980.
38. Mohammed M. Salehi, Insurgency through Culture and Religion -- The Islamic Revolution of Iran, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1988), p. 158.
39. The Shah declaration of some reforms in 1962-63 provoked a violent protest by Khomeini and a part of the clergy in Tehran and Qum. After the repression of the revolt, Khomeini was sent to exile until his victorious return during the revolution of 1979. Ayatollah Shariatmadari used his influence to convince the monarch not to kill Khomeini.
40. Benard and Khalilzad, p. 137.
41. Iran Times, 23 April 1982.
42. Shaul Bakhash, The Reign of the Ayatollahs: Iran and the Islamic Revolution, (N.Y.: Basic Books, Inc. Publishers, 1984), p. 223.
43. See "The Statement of the National Front on the Occasion of the Second Anniversary of the Glorious Revolution of 22nd of Bahman," in Payami Jebheye Melli, No. 52, February 10, 1982.

44. Mizan, February 23, 1981.

45. Mehdi Bazargan, Engelab-e Iran dar do harekat (The Iranian Revolution in Two Motions)," in Persian, (Tehran: Naragi Publications, 1984).

46. Afsaneh Najmabadi, "Mystifications of the Past and Illusions of the Future," in The Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic, edited by Nikki R. Keddie and Eric Hooglund, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), p. 150.

47. Ibid.

48. Mojahed, No. 108, February 5, 1981.

49. The People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI), At War With Humanity, (A report on the Human Rights record of the Khomeini regime), 1982, p. 91.

50. Ibid.

51. The semi-military groups which were organized in mosques and played a significant role in enforcement of the fundamentalist rules in the streets. Later on these groups were organized under the supervision of the Revolutionary Guards and helped them to destroy the opposition group.

52. New York Times, 27 October, 1981.

53. In the explosion of IRP headquarters on June 28, 1981 alone, at least 27 deputies and a total of 74 Islamic leaders were killed.

54. PMOI, p. 324.

55. For example, see Arjomand, p. 155.

56. Ibid, p. 154.

57. New York Times, October 24, 1981.

58. New York Times, September 30, 1981.

59. BAKHASH, p. 220.

60. Ibid.

61. Iran Times, 25 September 1981.

62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Tehran Times, 3 May 1983.
65. Hiro, p. 229.
66. Ibid.
67. This happened only three months before Khomeini's decree of "Islamisation of Judiciary" in which he made the opposite statement.
68. Arjomand, p. 170.
69. Ettelaat, 8 January 1984.
70. Arjomand, p. 170.
71. Fred Halliday, Iran: Dictatorship and Development, (New York, Penguin Books, 1979), p. 19.
72. Juan J. Linz, "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes," in Handbook of Political Science, (Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1975), p. 175-411.
73. Alexander Gershenkron, Continuity in History and Other Essays, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press), 1968, p. 4.
74. Eric Hooglund, "Rural Participation in the Revolution," MERIP Reports, 87 (May 1980), p. 141.
75. See Brinton's The Anatomy of Revolution, 1965, and Tilly's From Mobilization to Revolution, 1978.
76. Farrokh Moshiri, The State and Social Revolution in Iran, (N.Y.: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 1985), p. 182.
77. Haleh Afshar, Iran: A Revolution in Turmoil, (N.Y.: State University of New York, 1985), p. 238.

Chapter Five:

1. Saul Bakhsh, p. 248.
2. Bernard and Khalilzad, p. 121.
3. Ibid., p. 124.

4. This paper was written before the death of Khomeini. Although President Khamenii was announced as Khomeini's successor, right after his death, it's too soon for any prediction. One thing is certain: Iran is faced with some changes among its political leaders in the short term.

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